THE DOG STAR
CHAPTER 1:
CEREMONIES

It's so strange to see night again.

Did you get to hear how Applestar explained this to everyone else?
Ermm...
I think she said it was night training? Like, drills?

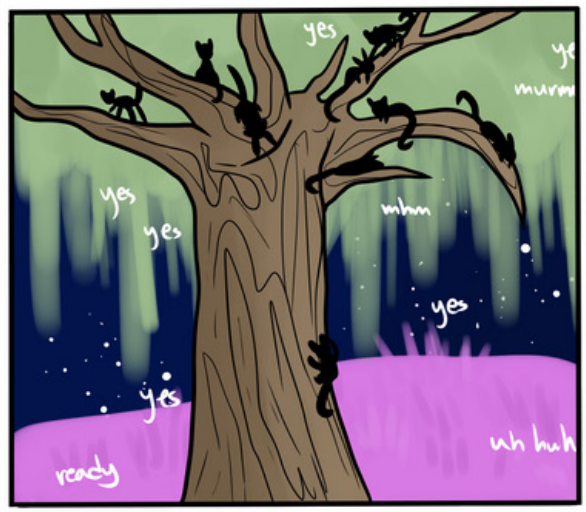
Haha! What, in case the sun burns out?

Maybe?... if the Dark Forest attacks again?...
They bought it, anyways.

Haha
The Dark Forest? I'd like to see them try!
Hey, Flamesnout, wh -
Whatever, though; I'm just glad I got to come.
Flamesnout?
Flamesnout?
- oh, uh, sorry, Shellspring, what was that?
Neeeever mind!
S'okay.
Anyways, we're here.

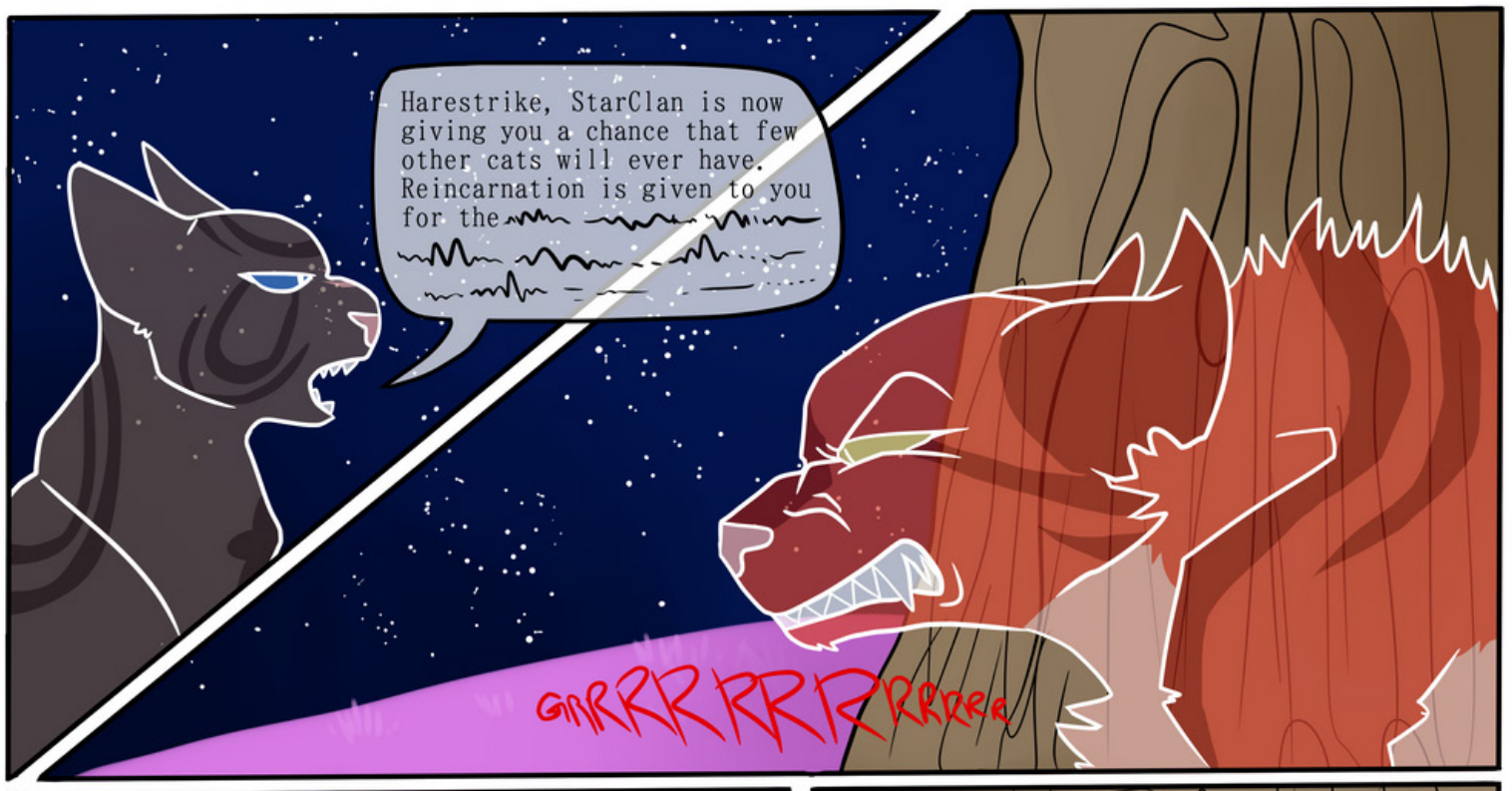
~scratch~
~huff~
SCRRRRTCCH
!!
Stop it... not tonight. Come on, just stay calm. It's not worth the risk.
This is so cool!...

Is everyone ready?


yes
yes
yes
mhm
yes
yes
ready
uh huh

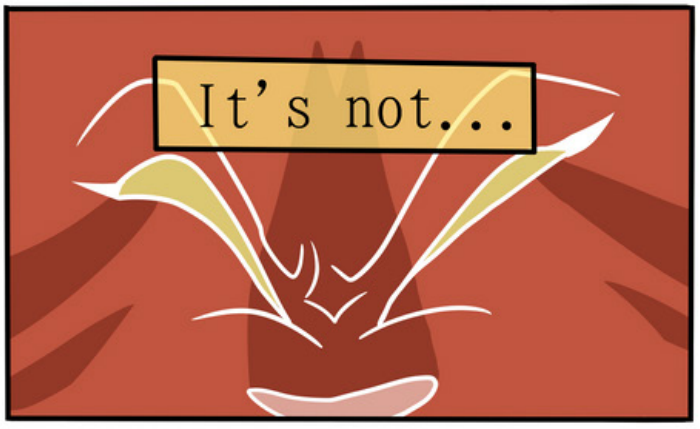
Thank you, Applestar...

Then let it be heard. Harestrike of SnowClan, Harestrike of StarClan, you are about to re-enter the world of the living. Gingerleaf has reached the end of her time tonight, has been chosen to take your place and your place only. As one life leaves the Clans, one will return.
Step forwards.


Harestrike, StarClan is now giving you a chance that few other cats will ever have. Reincarnation is given to you for the
GRRRRRRRRRRRRR

No, no, no, I can't do this... It's against the rules to protest. But - oh, you fox-heart, you dirty snake - we were just the same! So why are they getting this instead of me?
RRRR
RRRRRR

Why can't I?...


It's not...

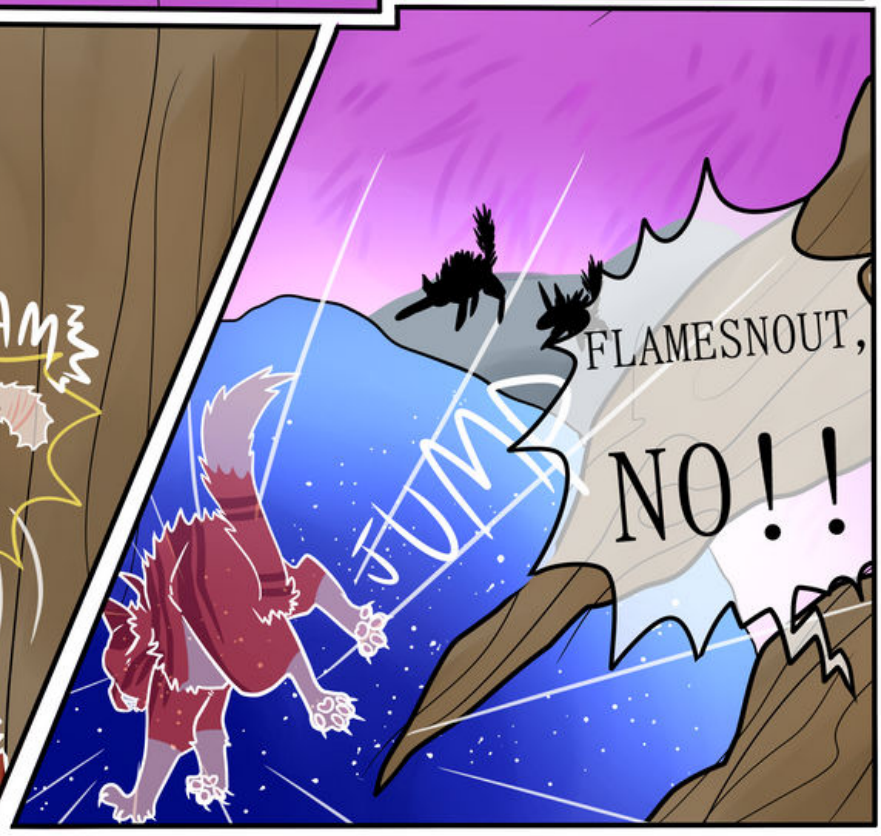
NO!!

GASP

Harestrike, I...

What are you DOING??
GET OFF ME!!
OW!!
SLASH

FLING
BAM


JUMP
FLAMESNOUT,
NO!!

SPLASH
SHOOM
HHHISSS
SSSSSS
SNNRRRRRLLLL
Sob
Sob
Sob
Sob

scratch
scratch
Get back.
Flamesnout.

HWOOSH

FSSSSSSHHHH
SSSNNRR
RRRLLLL

What is it? What's happening?
?
murmur
murmur
Applestar, did she make it back?
Filthy traitor. I always knew we couldn't trust her.
murmur
Hey Sandheart, didn't you know Flamesnout's mom or something? Was she like this?
???
murmur
Oh, StarClan...
! What's ng on??
mur

It's...
It worked.
grrrrr
Gingerleaf will be joining us soon.

No!!
But... but that -
That isn't possible!! It was meant for ME!
Well, she managed it. Knocking all down all the carefully constructed traditions. At the moment... I am not entirely certain what she did in its entirety. But I KNOW she won't get an easy ride into the Clans.
But - we can't let her -
ENOUGH, HARESTRIKE! HOLD YOUR TONGUE!
!...
StarClan, GO.
sigh

ummm...
What is it.
A-Applestar, please... she didn't mean to, w-we can't -
snnrk
snf
Shellspring.
eek!
Watch your tone. You're not the leader here.
...yes, Applestar.
I-I'm sorry for disturbing you.
snf
snffle
snf

Well? What are you waiting for?
...we can't let her do this, Applestar.
No, we can't.
And I won't.
...
And you're sure?
...that I can't go into the Abyss now?

Absolutely not. That moment has passed. It would just kill another cat, by force this time, and I - the stars aren't even sure who it would be.
Well, maybe it'll still -
Silence
- be...
...
fwish
stomp stomp stomp
hrssssss...

blink
blink
WAKE UP,
FLAMES OUT...

# END OF CHAPTER ONE:

## CEREMONIES